

this action to the list of mistakes made by the Johnson administration.

The Marines were replaced by an Organization of American States presence, order was restored and President Balaguer returned to his native land. He and his Social Christian Reform Party won the 1966 presidential race, despite charges of fraud, and went on to win two more consecutive terms.

Newsweek, which characterized President Balaguer as "slight, ascetic and sad-eyed," reported in 1965 that he was "neither an orator, nor a schemer," adding that many Dominicans considered him "an honest, kindly reformer."

President Balaguer lost the 1978 and 1982 presidential races, then was again victorious in 1986. He won reelection in 1996 (defeating Bosch) and in 1994. Two years later, after increasing criticism for vote fraud in the 1994 election, he resigned. He was unsuccessful in a 2000 bid to return to the presidency.

President Balaguer received mixed marks as head of his country. Soon after he took office the first time, critics were stifled, many going into exile while others were imprisoned or disappeared. Vote fraud and corruption seemed constants in the Dominican Republic, regardless of who was president.

He instituted large-scale public works, including the enormous 1992 Christopher Columbus Lighthouse. President Balaguer also brought about modest reforms and made a weekly habit of walking through his nation's small villages, visiting residents and passing out toys to children and medicine to the sick and listening to the desires of all.

Through it all, he managed to largely keep in the good graces of the United States, with the Dominican Republic becoming a huge recipient of U.S. foreign aid.

President Balaguer, whose only interests were colliers and antique cars, never married and had no children. He wrote books, including volumes of poetry and political science. He was fluent in English and French as well as Spanish.

But politics became his life. He was head of his political party until his death, continuing to broker political deals and to counsel not only his party colleagues but other high figures, including presidents, as well.

In the 1980s, when foes tried to use his blindness against him during a presidential run, he said, "I will not be asked to thread needles when in office."

Joaquin Balaguer Ricardo was born in the small town of Villa Bisono, the only son of eight children. His father was born in Puerto Rico of Castilian descent. His mother was a Dominican of Spanish blood.

The future president, who won a poetry award as a teenager, graduated with a degree in philosophy and letters from the Normal School in Santiago and was a 1929 graduate of the University of Santo Domingo law school. He was a state attorney in the land court before entering the foreign service in 1932. He served in Madrid and then in Paris, where he received a doctorate in law and political economy from the University of Paris in 1934.

In 1936, he was named undersecretary of state for the presidency. In the 1940s, he served as ambassador to Colombia and Venezuela. He entered the cabinet as secretary of education and culture in 1949 and became secretary of foreign affairs in 1954. He also taught law at the University of Santo Domingo before becoming vice president in 1957 and president in 1960.

He defended the Trujillo years as a time when a strong hand was needed to rule a backward nation not yet ready for democracy.

Yet in his 1988 autobiography, President Balaguer admitted that his first presidency, when he was the figurehead chief of state for

the brutal and bloody Trujillo, was "the saddest and most humiliating" time in his political life.

President Balaguer also had at times deplored the "unavoidable excesses" of his own security forces and deplored corruption, though stoutly maintaining that corruption stopped at his door.

IN HONOR OF THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF LA-Z-BOY, INC.

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 26, 2002

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and pay tribute to La-Z-Boy, Incorporated, which was founded and remains headquartered in my Congressional District in Monroe, Michigan. La-Z-Boy is celebrating 75 years of bringing comfort, quality and style into homes and offices worldwide through its extensive selection of furniture.

The La-Z-Boy story is the story of the American dream. On March 24, 1927, in Monroe, Michigan, two young entrepreneurs and cousins, Edward M. Knabusch and Edwin J. Shoemaker, left the security of their jobs to take a leap of faith and begin manufacturing a unique and innovative product. A porch chair wrapped in fabric was the prototype for the La-Z-Boy recliner, a moniker that has become a worldwide household term. Using money from Edwin's mortgaged family farm and donations from relatives, the cousins built their first factory by hand, brick by brick. After introducing the revolutionary chair that both rocked and reclined, La-Z-Boy sales skyrocketed. La-Z-Boy evolved from a small business to having a place on the New York Stock Exchange.

La-Z-Boy has grown immensely in its 75 years of operation. The company has added many new products and features over the years, which have enabled it to remain competitive in the furniture industry since its founding. La-Z-Boy has grown from "two guys in a garage" to nearly 19,000 employees worldwide. Today, La-Z-Boy generates annual sales in excess of \$2 billion, making it the largest manufacturer of upholstered furniture and the world's leading producer of reclining chairs.

La-Z-Boy is a great success and consistently shares its good fortune with the community of Monroe. Its philanthropy is rooted in small town values that prevailed when Mr. Knabusch and Mr. Shoemaker first launched the company. During World War II, La-Z-News kept the community informed about overseas news, and the company rented out garages to build the most comfortable tank seats and crash pads in the country. La-Z-Boy continues being very much involved in the city of Monroe and is a major asset to Michigan's 16th Congressional District.

Mr. Speaker, I would like you to join me in commending the La-Z-Boy corporation and its employees for their leadership in both their industry and in their community, as we celebrate their 75th anniversary.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 26, 2002

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I was absent March 12 through 14 for medical reasons. Had I been here, I would have voted "yes" on rollcall votes 53-54, 56-61, 63-64 and "no" on rollcall votes 55 and 62.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF MASTER GUNNERY SERGEANT MICHAEL THOMAS FLETCHER, UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

HON. LANE EVANS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 26, 2002

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, on the occasion of his retirement, it is my pleasure to recognize an exceptional United States Marine, Master Gunnery Sergeant Michael Thomas Fletcher. Master Gunnery Sergeant Fletcher has served our Nation with distinction for over three decades in the United States Marine Corps, rising from Private to Master Gunnery Sergeant. He has served in times of both war and peace and has gone from patrolling the jungles of Vietnam to walking the halls of Congress. During the Vietnam War, he was awarded: the Combat Action Ribbon; the Vietnam Service Medal with one star; the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal; and the Republic of Vietnam Meritorious Unit Citation of the Gallantry Cross. His personal awards have included two Navy/Marine Corps Achievement Medals, a Navy/Marine Corps Commendation Medal, and he has been recently recommended for the Legion of Merit.

During Master Gunnery Sergeant Fletcher's last six years of service, he has been the Administration Chief in the United States Marine Corps' Office of Legislative Affairs. That office supports Members of Congress and Congressional committees in matters of legislation, protocol, and logistics for Congressional travel. Master Gunnery Sergeant Fletcher brought a wealth of managerial expertise and leadership to this office and contributed significantly to the successful accomplishment of its mission.

During these six years, Master Gunnery Sergeant Fletcher has helped carry the Corp's message to the Congress. He has enabled the Marine Corps' Office of Legislative Affairs to provide consistent and timely responses to the United States Congress, and in doing so, has made a lasting contribution in the containment of today's readiness and shape of tomorrow's Marine Corps. Particularly noteworthy have been his efforts in directing, organizing, and escorting Members of Congress and their staffs around the world. His attention to detail in making these important trips logistically successful is yet another indication of this Marine's talent and professionalism.

Master Gunnery Sergeant Fletcher has made immeasurable contributions to both today's Marine Corps' and to the Corps of the 21st Century. His superior performance of duties highlights the culmination of more than 30 years of honorable and dedicated Marine Corps service. By his exemplary competence,